

Message Text

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S E C R E T LUANDA 1262

EXDIS

DOD ADDRESSEES TREAT AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EFEF EAID AO EO

SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES

REF: STATE 203574

1. HERewith ANSWERS TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS RAISED IN PARA SEVEN
OF REFTEL:

2. MOST REFUGEE RELIEF FUNDS FOR ANGOLA SHOULD BE
CHANNELED THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES. EACH OF
THE THREE MOVEMENTS HAS STAKED A CLAIM TO A FAIRLY
WELL DEFINED PIECE OF TERRITORY AND A U.S. EFFORT WOULD
RUN IMMEDIATELY INTO SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS. THE
RED CROSS AND UNDP ARE FUNCTIONING AND ALTHOUGH I DO NOT
KNOW WHAT THE UNHCR HAS DECIDED TO DO, I ASSUME THEY WILL
GEAR UP SHORTLY WITH SOME KIND OF PROGRAM. THE
PORTUGUESE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE HAS BEEN ACTIVELY
INVOLVED IN TRANSPORTING AND FEEDING REFUGEES AND WE CAN
USEFULLY CONTRIBUTE ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO THAT EFFORT:

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I GAVE 25,000 DOLLARS SOME WEEKS AGO. BY FAR THE

GREATEST AMOUNTS, I SHOULD THINK, WOULD GO TO
INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES.

3. THE MIX OF AIRCRAFT IS A DIFFICULT QUESTION
TO ANSWER. THE FUEL PROBLEM IS A MAJOR FACTOR. 747'S
LEAVE ABOUT 218 TONS OF FUEL BEHIND WHEN THEY COME
IN FROM PORTUGAL AND REFUEL FOR THE RETURN TRIP IN
ACCRA. AS 741'S CANNOT OPERATE OR CANNOT SAFELY OPERATE,
OUT OF NOVA LISBOA, THE ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT WE WILL USE
IN OUR AIRLIFT WILL PUT A STRAIN ON FULL SUPPLIES THERE.
GROUND SUPPORT AT BOTH AIRPORTS IS POOR THESE DAYS AND
ALTHOUGH THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT SAYS THAT TAP WILL BEEF
UP ITS GROUND PERSONNEL, THE USG HAD BEST COUNT ON POOR
SERVICE. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE USAF HAS PLANES
THAT ARE CONSIDERED MORE SELF-CONTAINED THAN OTHERS, OR
WHETHER THE CONCEPT EVEN EXISTS, BUT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE
AIRCRAFT AND CREWS SHOULD BE EQUIPPED TO TAKE CARE OF
PROBLEMS ON THEIR OWN.

4. MANY OF THE WHITES HERE WHO WANT TO LEAVE, WILL NEED
FINANCIAL HELP. THEY ARE FORCED TO SELL WHAT THEY CAN AT VERY LOW
PRICES AND THEN CONVERT THEIR ANGOLAN ESCUDOS INTO PORTUGUESE
ESCUDOS BY PAYING A SIX HUNDRED PER CENT PREMIUM BECAUSE
THEY CANNOT EXCHANGE MONEY AT THE LEGAL RATE THROUGH THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF MONEY AND CREDIT. ADDITIONALLY, DEPOSITERS
MAY NOW WITHDRAW ONLY 20,000 ESCUDOS A MONTH FROM THE BANK.
THOUSANDS OF PORTUGUESE PEASANTS SETTLED IN ANGOLA.
THEY HAD LITTLE WHEN THEY ARRIVED AND ALTHOUGH
MANY HAVE DONE WELL HERE BY PORTUGUESE STANDARDS,
THEY ARE STILL LOWER MIDDLE CLASS, WITH A SMALL
MARGIN OF SAVINGS. IN THEIR PANIC MANY ARE LEAVING BEHIND
THEIR MOST VALUABLE ASSET - REAL ESTATE THAT CANNOT NOW BE
CONVERTED INTO CASH. AT THE PRESENT TIME, WHITES ARE SORTING
THEMSELVES OUT AS BETWEEN PAYING AND NON-PAYING.
REFUGEES REGISTER FOR FREE FLIGHTS AT GOVERNMENT
OFFICES. ALTHOUGH SOME NON-REFUGEES SIGN UP, THERE SEEMS
TO HAVE BEEN LITTLE EFFORT BY THOSE WHO CAN PAY TO CHEAT.
ONE REASON, OF COURSE, IS THAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE
RESERVATIONS ON COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS ARE NOT GOING TO
ABANDON THEM IN FAVOR OF A REFUGEE FLIGHT THAT MANY NEVER
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TAKE OFF. ONCE THE U.S. AIRLIFT BECOMES OPERATIVE,
HOWEVER, THE REFUGEE FLIGHTS WILL BE A VIABLE OPTION FOR
MANY PEOPLE AND WE CAN EXPECT MORE CROSSING OVER BY
THOSE ABLE TO PAY. WE WILL JUST HAVE TO LET THE
PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT SORT THIS OUT. IN ORDER TO GET
THE MOST PUBLIC RELATIONS BENEFIT OUT OF OUR
ASSISTANCE WE MUST AVOID BUREAUCRATIC HAGGLING AT THE
LOCAL LEVEL TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE.

THE ONLY EVACUATION ASSISTANCE I AM AWARE OF AT PRESENT
IS A LIFT OF THREE PLANES DONATED BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

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